In this literary lesson, students use fairy tales to practice identifying character traits. Students are challenged to justify their reasoning using text based support.

**Learning Objectives**

Students will be able to describe a character's traits using text-based support.

**Materials and Preparation**

- Chart paper
- *Little Red Riding Hood* storybook
- *The Three Little Pigs* storybook

**Key Terms**

- character
- character trait
- evidence

**Introduction (5 minutes)**

- Call the students together and tell them that today, they will learn about characters in stories.
- Remind students that a **character** can be a person, animal or creature. When we read about a character, we learn about what makes them different from other characters in the story. We can talk about the character’s physical traits that we can see or we can talk about the **character traits** they have on the inside.
- Tell students that they will need to act like detectives finding evidence to solve a mystery. Remind them that **evidence** means proof. We will find evidence about character traits by reading about what how different characters act.

**EL**

- **Beginning**: Provide a student-friendly definition with a labeled example of character. Display it on the board.
- Show an image of a character from a recent story read in class.
- Allow ELs to look up the terms (character, character traits, evidence) with a home language resource. Give them the opportunity to talk with a partner about the terms in their home language.
- **Intermediate**: Have ELs discuss what they know about **character traits** with a partner and then share out as a whole group. Allow them to use L1 or L2.
- Provide a word bank for students to use when discussing what they know about **character traits**.
- Share examples of character traits of different individuals in the class. For example, identify a student as thoughtful, outgoing, or tall.

**Explicit Instruction/Teacher Modeling (10 minutes)**

- Explain that when we talk about physical character traits, we are describing what a character looks like. These are traits that can be seen on the outside, like the character's hair color or clothing. Emphasize that physical traits and character traits are different things.
- Tell students we will place this information on chart paper to help us write about the character. Make sure the chart paper is divided into two columns for outside and inside character traits.
- Read aloud *Little Red Riding Hood*. Think aloud about the physical traits of the wolf. Say to students, "I want to think about what the story tells me about how the wolf looks. I need to look for evidence. I will go back to the story and look for information about that. It says in the story that Red says, 'What big ears you have' and 'What big teeth you have.' This tells me that wolf must have big ears and teeth. Now, I
know that the physical traits the wolf has are big ears and teeth."

- Record this information on the chart paper. Continue going back to the story and finding evidence about the wolf's physical traits.
- Emphasize that we can only add information about the wolf's physical traits that we find in the story. Remind students that they must have evidence from the text.
- Next, model finding internal character traits. Describe internal traits to the students as what makes different characters unique. We can find evidence for these traits from a character's actions, words, and thoughts.
- Model going back to the story and looking for the wolf's internal character traits. Tell students that it says in the story that the wolf pretended to be lost. Think aloud in your model by saying, "This tells me he is a dishonest wolf. Dishonesty is the character trait, and my evidence is that he lied to Red about getting lost in the woods. His actions show he is dishonest."
- Make sure to emphasize that we find internal traits by looking at what the character says, does, and thinks. Continue to model finding internal character traits using textual evidence.

**Guided Practice/Interactive Modeling (15 minutes)**

- Have students fold pieces of paper in half. Have them label one side with "Physical Traits" and the other side with "Internal Traits."
- Tell students that they will reread the story with partners and find evidence about Red Riding Hood's character traits.
- As a whole group, go back into the story and find one piece of evidence for each column. For example, an outside character trait for Red would be that she is a little girl.
- Have the students look back in the story to find evidence to support this character trait. When students share, make sure they are able to say where in the text they found their answer.
- For an internal trait, an example could be that Red is brave. Have students find evidence to support this trait.
- Students continue working in pairs to finish the list.
- At the end of this portion of the lesson, have students compile and share their lists.

**Independent Working Time (15 minutes)**

- Explain that students will now read The Three Little Pigs on their own. They will find inside and outside character traits for one character of their choice.
- They will make a list in the same way that they did for Red Riding Hood.

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**EL**

- **Beginning:** Allow ELs to read aloud *The Three Little Pigs* to a partner or the teacher.
- **Provide ELs with a word bank of character traits that describe the character of their choice.**
- **Encourage students to reference a student-friendly glossary of words and phrases (internal character trait, physical character trait).**
- **Intermediate:** Give ELs extra time to complete the task as homework.
- **Allow ELs to use a glossary or dictionary in their home language for unfamiliar words.**

**Differentiation**

- **Enrichment:** Have advanced students make an additional list of character traits based on a character from their independent reading.
- **Support:** For students having difficulty, provide sentence stems. For example, “I know that Red Riding Hood is [trait] because in the story she says [direct quotation].” You can also highlight evidence within the text and have them tell you what traits go along with the evidence.

**Technology Integration**

**Related Books and/or Media**

- **INTERACTIVE STORY:** *The Three Little Pigs*

**Assessment (15 minutes)**

- To assess understanding, circulate the room during Guided Practice and Independent Working Time and observe students as they work.
- At the conclusion of the lesson, collect students' lists of character traits. Check the lists for accuracy.

**Review and Closing (5 minutes)**

- Call students together. Have students share the character traits they found in *The Three Little Pigs*. Make sure to ask students to tell where in the text they found evidence for their answer.
- When closing the lesson, ask students to share what they learned about character traits and the difference between physical and internal traits.

**EL**

- **Beginning:** Focus on students' correct identification of character traits and the text evidence they provided in class and group discussion.
- **Intermediate:** Ask students to orally explain the difference between physical character traits and internal character traits with a partner or the group when working. Provide a word bank of internal and physical traits, as well as a sentence frame: An internal character trait is..., and a physical character trait is... The main difference is....

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**EL**

- **Beginning:** Give learners a sentence frame to use in the class discussion: The character was... because...
- **Provide ELs with partnerships about the character traits they identified in *The Three Little Pigs*.**
- **Ask ELs to create a visual representation of an internal character trait and a physical character trait as a way to show understanding about the difference between the two.**
- **Intermediate:** Have ELs share the character traits they identified in the story with a partner, small group, and then with the whole class. Provide a sentence frame: I know the character was... The text evidence I found was...
- **Ask ELs to verbally summarize what they learned about character traits and the difference between the two for the whole class using a paragraph frame.**

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